

“It all started with a passion...”

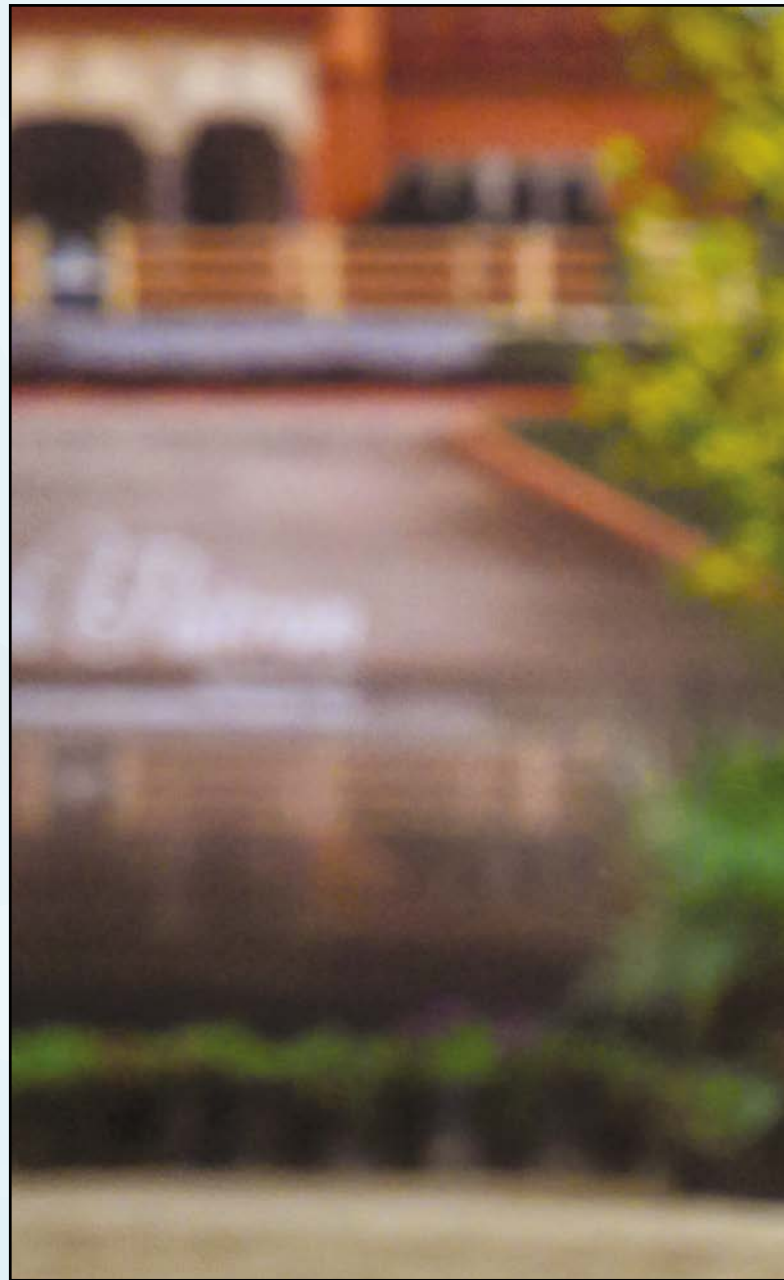
“As far back as I can recall, I have always loved to ‘capture’ a moment in time. Make a memory ... then share it!”

Becoming an Equine Photographer within the Arabian Horse Community, has been more of an evolution than an instant awareness on my part. However, if there has been one unwavering and consistent theme in my life, it has to be the passionate love affair I have with the horses. My great-grandfather recognized this immediately, leading him to entrust me with his last carriage horse when I was still just a toddler. This gentle black mare was my treasured gift and she would stir a passion deep within me that would forever keep me captivated.

After discovering the Arabian breed for the first time at a National horse show as a teenager, I was instantly mesmerized by their beauty and the fact that they seemed to believe in their own significance, in both halter and performance levels of competition. This definitely struck a chord with me. I found my direction was changed in an instant, and it was clear that I was about to embark on an adventure that would change the course of my life forever. Discovering a friend in Gail Hutchison-Lundquist and taking English riding lessons on a bay *Bask++ son, turned out to be the perfect step in the direction I was driven to go. At this point, I wasn't just smitten by the Arabian, I was experiencing it.

Shortly thereafter, I was off to Nichols-Delongpre Arabians in Bridgewater, CT. As a young woman, it was a complete fantasy to be working with great horses like National Champion *Elkin++, *Fantazja, and the amazing *Elzunia (to name only a few). Even so, I have to admit I had a favorite and that would have to be Barbary. He stole my heart. He was purely heaven sent for me at that time.

Paul and Dody Wood of Colonial Wood Arabians, had just acquired the beautiful National Champion Bask Melody



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from Lasma when I went to their enchanting farm in Arlington, Texas. They welcomed me like a family member and they have remained life-long friends to this day. Paul is perhaps one of the most positive individuals I've ever known and it was through his encouragement that my life launched into yet another amazing new chapter, and off I went to Lasma Arabians.

It isn't every day where you find yourself living a dream come true and I vividly recall my arrival at Lasma Arabians on the famous Bell Road. It would be impossible to summarize the impact of this experience in a few sentences, however, it was an adventure I will never forget. I had the great honor and privilege of working in the Lasma Stud Barn with genuine Arabian horse royalty: *Bask++, *El Mudir, Fame, Dancing Flame, Gwyndalyn, Habina, True Love, *El Paso, *Rustann and *Wizja, to name the Aristocrats of that great barn. How could I not be simply ecstatic with excitement and anticipation when these magnificent horses were a part of my entire day? ... and believe me, I was ecstatic! *Bask++, of course, is legendary. Yet my personal connection was with the 1977 US National Champion mare *Wizja. While I knew she would never belong to me, she was then and has remained my 'once in a lifetime horse'. I know I could not possibly explain such a connection, but suffice it to say, this powerful and elegant mare had simply etched her essence into my soul. It thrills me to no end, just knowing that she lives on in the royal blood of the beautiful *Wieza Mocy.

I left Lasma only to return to University, taking with me so many 'hallmark' moments, like witnessing a Park horse transform itself with so much 'heart' they could literally stop you dead in your tracks ... leaving you speechless and in awe. Even so, it was the quiet moments that offered the most gratification, like walking quietly through the barn late at night, listening to the silent grazing. As you passed each stall you could reach up to the occupants and consistently find huge black eyes staring back at you, small alert shapely ears, large flared nostrils that might pretend to be a bit surprised by your presence. What a great experience! All of these are the moments I seek to rediscover to this day, with

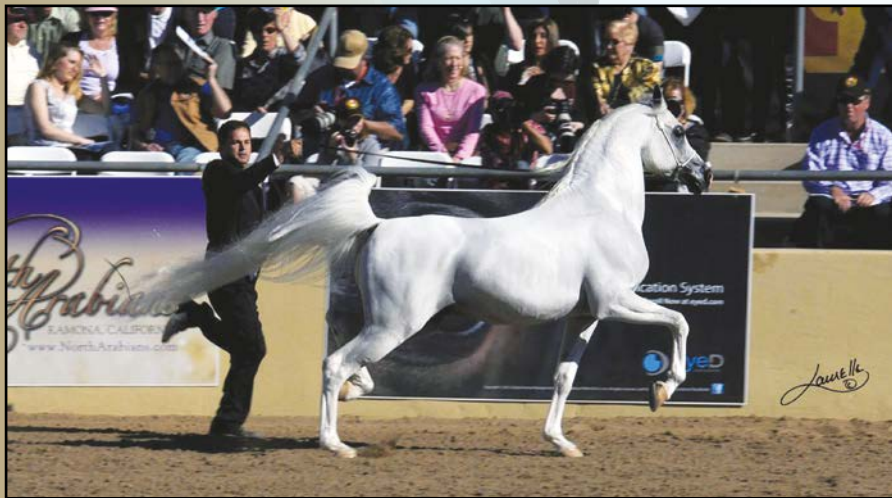


the help of my camera and lens. I've often thought how incredible it would be to go back in time to those treasured days, but clearly, this is merely a heavenly thought.

Years later, I had the good fortune to work with my dear friend Johnny Downing at Ventura Farms in Thousand Oaks, CA. Ventura Farms had just recently acquired the treasured Lasma mares of my past and to discover that these great mares would be a part of my daily routine for a second time, has always left me feeling twice blessed. The Ventura experience brought a constant stream of Breeders, Trainers and visitors from all over the world. All were eager to visit this acclaimed ranch in search of just the right horses, possibly to add to, or to enhance their own breeding programs, or perhaps to be simply transformed by the magical experience of Ventura Farms itself. It was at this farm where I first met the renowned Brazilian

Breeders Jairo Jorge with his beautiful wife Stella, as well as Paulo & Ricardo Saliba. How fitting was it, that at the end of this chapter, Johnny Downing and these select clients, provided me with a Brazilian Arabian Horse Adventure of a lifetime. I will never forget all the farms we visited, the hospitality and friendships discovered, all which I continue to hold close to my heart. Today, as I walk through the various Arabian horse shows and events with my camera, I recognize these similar experiences and they so clearly emulate the community that sustains so many of us year after year. It's a very powerful and addictive aspect of this passion, you can almost feel the pulse of this energy. I love just that!

So where has this passion and life adventure taken me? Well, quite simply I have arrived at a place where there is no greater privilege than to photograph and capture the





beauty, attitude and spirit of the Arabian horse. This is what feeds my soul. Each horse has their own story to tell ... the fun part is finding it, or disclosing it, then locking it in the view from my lens.

Do I have favored subjects? Absolutely! It would have to be those unique individuals that soulfully believe the most in their own significance, snorting and blowing their own interpretations of themselves as they dance before you. They generate an intensity that could ripple through a crowd,

and at other times, it is a performance horse, particularly those that pour their hearts into their task! When I can't resist a loud 'wooooo' and my camera is in hand, I search for that incredible fractured second when precision meets perfection. I swear it transforms me to the back of that saddle and takes me on a ride of recollection! Way fun!

Regardless of our own individual perspectives and opinions, the Arabian horse will not be under-estimated. From soaring highs to heartbreaking lows, it will still carry



you if you are willing to travel along bearing witness to its global evolution. And I am merely a companion to this magnificent breed, here to capture brief moments of perfection within my passion.

There are so many people I owe a great debt of gratitude to for their constant support and encouragement over the years, and while I couldn't possibly thank them all here, I would like to acknowledge one individual who has remained so very supportive of my passion and my photography.

This would be my fiancé Gerry Callisen. Years ago he encouraged me to 'spread my wings' and to explore new opportunities. He clearly believes in me and that remains such a beautiful gift, which I treasure. I further owe a debt of gratitude to all the truly amazing photographers who constantly inspire me! Quite simply, I love what you do!

In closing, I like this quote from my webpage at www.laurelleanderson.com and I believe it may just be the an appropriate way to summarize:

"It is certainly safe to say that I genuinely treasure my life experiences, each one is rich with the unique perspective of 'my road'... perhaps even one that may be considered to be 'less traveled'. Yet, it has been so incredibly worthwhile and profoundly captivating for me.

I'm constantly amazed and inspired at the extraordinary people I count in my circle of friends and the spirit of living art that graciously weaves its beauty through the days and events of my life.

The best part ... is that it all just continues to grow and evolve.

These pages are but a brief glimpse of that which touches my heart and soul.

Thank you for visiting my pages and for checking out the beauty of my passions from the vision in my lens."



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